

# Appendix A

## **ADVANCE NOTIFICATION PACKAGE**

### *for the*

## ***J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area Proposed Land Transfer***

*Palm Beach and Martin Counties, Florida*

**JULY 2005**

*Prepared For:*





## United States Department of the Interior

### FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

1875 Century Boulevard  
Atlanta, Georgia 30345

NOV 15 2004

In Reply Refer To:  
FWS/R4/MS-FA

Ms. Lauren Milligan, Coordinator  
Florida State Clearinghouse  
Department of Environmental Protection  
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, MS 47  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

**RE: J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area Proposed Land Transfer  
Environmental Assessment Advance Notification Package**

Dear Ms. Milligan:

The attached Advance Notification Package is forwarded to your office for processing through appropriate State agencies in accordance with Executive Order 95-359. Distribution to local and Federal agencies, and certain other interested parties is being made as noted.

The Fish and Wildlife Service is in the process of determining the degree of environmental analysis necessary for this project. This determination will be based upon environmental evaluations and comments received through coordination with other agencies and the public.

Although more specific comments will be solicited during the National Environmental Policy Act and permit coordination processes, we request that permitting and permit reviewing agencies review the attached information and furnish us with any comments they consider pertinent at this time. Please provide a consistency review for this project in accordance with the State's Coastal Management Program. In addition, please review this project's consistency, to the maximum extent feasible, with the approved Comprehensive Plan of the applicable local government jurisdiction(s) pursuant to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes.

We look forward to receiving your comments on this project within 15 days of the receipt of this letter. This project is being expedited and your prompt handling of this notice is appreciated.

Your comments should be addressed to:

Mr. Kevin Moody, Regional Environmental Coordinator  
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
1875 Century Boulevard, Suite 200  
Atlanta, GA 30345




cc: Bevin A. Beaudet, Palm Beach County  
Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida  
Muskogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma  
Seminole Tribe of Florida  
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma  
Poarch Band of Creek Indians of Alabama  
Charles Pattison, AICP, Executive Director, 1000 Friends of Florida  
Eric Draper, Policy Director, Audubon Society of Florida  
Manley Fuller, President, Florida Wildlife Federation  
Environmental Law & Land Use Law Center  
Loxahatchee River Coalition  
Palm Beach County Environmental Coalition  
Sierra Club  
Environmental Protection Agency - Region IV, Regional Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration - Airports District Office, Manager  
Federal Emergency Management Agency - Regional Environmental Officer  
Federal Railroad Administration - Office of Economic Analysis  
U.S. Department of Commerce - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Regional Environmental Officer  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - CERP, District Engineer, Program Manager  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Regulatory Branch, District Engineer, Program Manager  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - Center for Environmental Health and Injury Control  
U.S. Department of Interior - Geological Survey, Chief - Review Unit  
U.S. Department of Interior - Bureau of Land Management - Eastern States Office, Director  
U.S. Department of Interior - National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office  
U.S. Department of Interior - Office of Trust Responsibilities, Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Florida Department of Transportation, Environmental Management Office  
Florida Department of Transportation, District 4  
Indian Trail Improvement District  
J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area  
Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners  
Palm Beach County Administration  
Palm Beach County Environmental Resource Management  
Palm Beach County MPO  
City of Palm Beach Gardens, Mayor  
City of Palm Beach Gardens City Council  
Martin County Board of County Commissioners

Ms. Milligan

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If there are any questions, please contact Mr. Moody at 404/679-7089.

Sincerely yours,

  
acting for  
Sam D. Hamilton  
Regional Director

Enclosure

**ADVANCE NOTIFICATION FACT SHEET**  
**J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area**  
**Proposed Land Transfer**  
**Environmental Assessment**

1. Purpose and Need for Project:

Palm Beach County, in cooperation with the United States Department of the Interior - Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) of proposed change in the use of lands within the J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area (JWCWMA). Two tracts of JWCWMA land located in Palm Beach County, Florida, would be used for purposes other than those for which they were acquired; the wildlife-related values of those tracts would be replaced with lands in Martin County, Florida. Creation of the JWCWMA was partially underwritten by funds raised and distributed pursuant to the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. § 669 et seq.). Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act funds are generated by purchases of certain sports equipment by hunters, wildlife viewers, and others, and administered through the Service. Accordingly, the Service shares responsibility for authorizing this change in land use and the proposed replacement lands.

The change in land use and replacement of wildlife-related values would accommodate key infrastructure components of the proposed Palm Beach County Biotechnology Research Park (PBCBRP). The infrastructure plans would require the construction of a new Florida Power & Light (FP&L) substation and transmission poles, modifications to the Corbett Canal, and widening and extension of a portion of the right-of-way along the Seminole/Pratt-Whitney Road, all within the JWCWMA, which adjoins the proposed PBCBRP. The EA will identify and evaluate the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts associated with the proposed change in use of JWCWMA lands, as well as the proposed mitigation for those impacts. A vicinity map of the study is depicted on Figure 1, Project Vicinity Map (note that acreage values may differ from more recent determinations cited in this text).

In order to describe the need for the project, some additional background is necessary. In May 2004, Palm Beach County submitted a Development of Regional Impact (DRI) Application for Development Approval (ADA) for the PBCBRP project site to the State of Florida for subsequent approval. Ultimately, The Scripps Research Institute (TSRI) based in La Jolla, California would occupy approximately 102.03 acres of the site. Much of the remaining land would be made available to other biotechnology companies and related high technology industries and support infrastructure. Palm Beach County also proposes to use a portion of the property to enhance surrounding environmentally sensitive lands, meet regional water management goals, and to buffer nearby residents.



The map displays the Jonathan Dickinson State Park area. A large yellow-shaded region is labeled "J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area". Three specific parcels are highlighted with black boxes and labels:

- 60.00 Acre Minkin Parcel**: Located in the upper left, near the "NTS" (Not To Scale) indicator.
- 1.25 Acre Corbett Parcel A**: Located in the upper right, near the "MARTIN CO PALM BEACH CO" boundary.
- 28.59 Acre Corbett Parcel B**: Located in the lower center, near the "Twentymile Bend" area.

The map also shows various geographical features including "Jonathan Dickinson State Park", "Palm Beach County", "West Palm Beach", "Royal Palm Beach", "Greenwood", "Stonille Bend", "Twentymile Bend", "Loughatchee", "Flooded", "Green", "Hwy 1", "Hwy 7", "Hwy 10", "Hwy 20", "Hwy 22", "Hwy 30", "Hwy 31", "Hwy 37", "Hwy 40", "Hwy 42", "Hwy 44", "Hwy 46", "Hwy 48", "Hwy 50", "Hwy 52", "Hwy 54", "Hwy 56", "Hwy 58", "Hwy 60", "Hwy 62", "Hwy 64", "Hwy 66", "Hwy 68", "Hwy 70", "Hwy 72", "Hwy 74", "Hwy 76", "Hwy 78", "Hwy 80", "Hwy 82", "Hwy 84", "Hwy 86", "Hwy 88", "Hwy 90", "Hwy 92", "Hwy 94", "Hwy 96", "Hwy 98", "Hwy 100".

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2. Description of the Project:

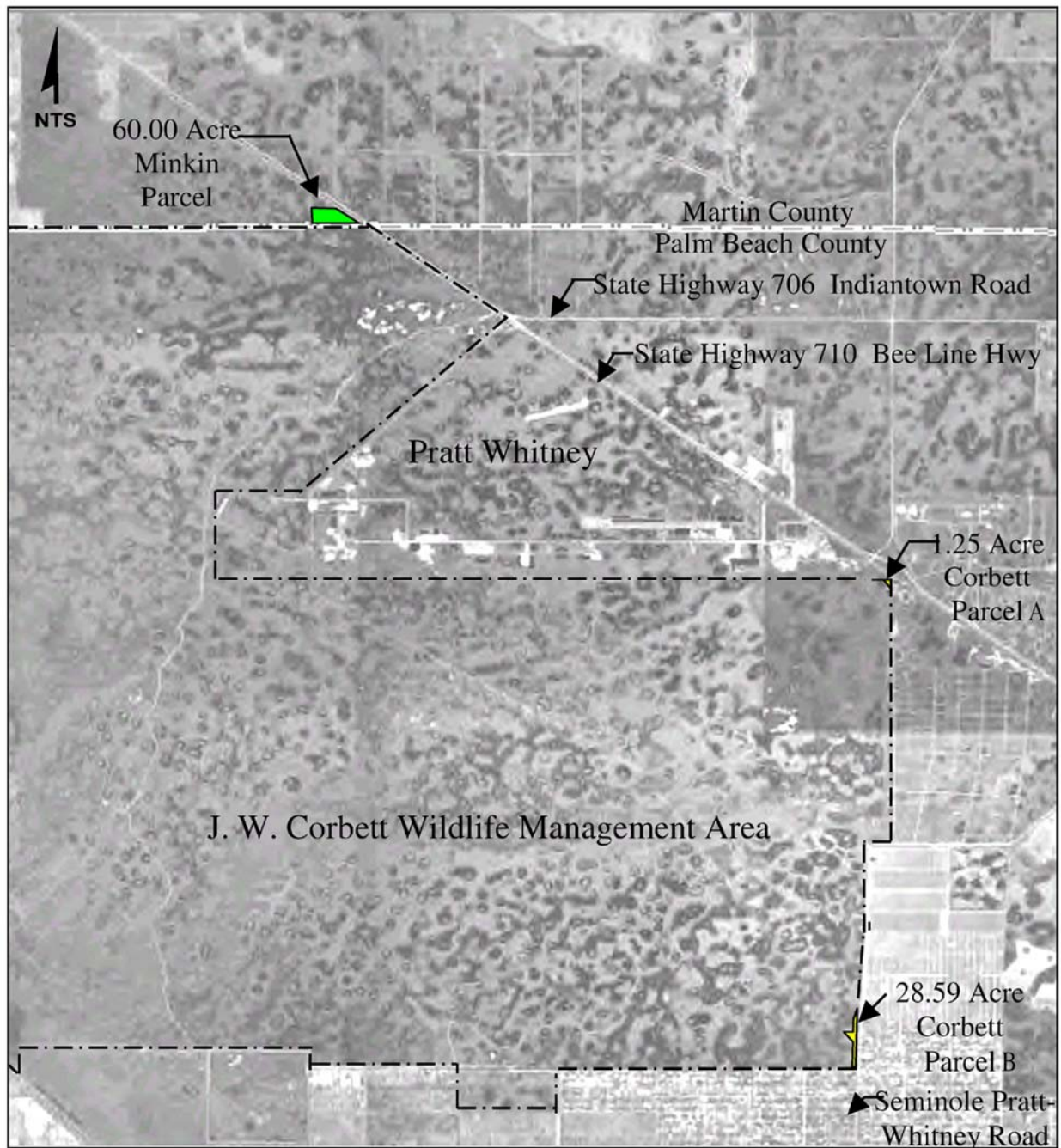
The proposed changes in use would affect areas near the southeast and northeast corners of the JWCWMA. At the northeast corner of the JWCWMA, 1.25 acres are required to accommodate the construction of a future connection of the Seminole/Pratt-Whitney Road to S.R. 710 (Bee Line Highway) (Corbett Parcel A). At the southeast corner, the proposed action would require 22.0 acres of right-of-way for the Corbett Canal and the associated maintenance area and the widening of the Seminole/Pratt-Whitney Road; an additional 6.37 acres would be needed for the construction of a new (FP&L) substation adjacent to the existing power line transmission corridor, for a total of 28.37 acres (Corbett Parcel B). The total acreage impacted in the JWCWMA would be 29.62 acres. See Figure 2, Project Location Map (acreage values may differ from those cited in this text).

In order to mitigate for the impact on the JWCWMA, the County proposes to purchase and deed to the State of Florida an undeveloped parcel totaling 60 acres, for a 2:1 land exchange. The 60-acre parcel, known as the Minkin Parcel, is located within Section 30, Township 40 South, Range 40 East in Martin County. It is located adjacent to the Palm Beach County/Martin County line and S.R. 710 and abuts the existing JWCWMA boundary. The parcel has been evaluated and determined to be an acceptable addition to the JWCWMA. See Figure 2, Project Location Map (note again that acreage values may differ from those cited in this text).

The direct, indirect or secondary, and cumulative impacts to the JWCWMA and the land exchange action are the subject of this EA.

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**Figure 2**  
**Project Location Map**





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3. Environmental Information:

- a. Land Use: The proposed 1.25-acre roadway right-of-way parcel (Corbett Parcel A) is located at the northeast corner of JWCWMA adjacent to the intersection of the Seminole/Pratt-Whitney Road and S.R. 710 (Bee Line Highway). The parcel can be characterized as a mixture of wet and dry flatwoods and depressional marsh. The parcel is adjacent to the JWCWMA to the southwest, the Pratt-Whitney industrial complex to the northwest, and the CSX Railroad, a drainage canal, the Seminole/Pratt-Whitney Road and S.R. 710 to the north and east. Across the roads to the north and east, the land use is currently rural undeveloped properties with approved plans for future development.

The proposed Corbett Canal and the associated maintenance area and the widening and extension of the Seminole/Pratt-Whitney Road property (22.0 acres) and the proposed FP&L substation property (6.37 acres) are contiguous to one another and are located at the southeast corner of the JWCWMA (Corbett Parcel B). The properties can be characterized as open grassy field, wet flatwoods, and wet prairie. Bordering the properties immediately to the north and west is JWCWMA property. Located to the south is “the Acreage,” a rural residential neighborhood and part of the City of Palm Beach Gardens. Bordering to the east are the Seminole/Pratt-Whitney Road and more rural residential neighborhoods. Just to the northeast across the proposed Seminole/Pratt-Whitney Road extension is the proposed PBCBRP site.

The proposed Minkin Parcel (60 acres) is located immediately north of the Martin County/Palm Beach County line on the south side of S. R. 710. This parcel is dominated by a large undisturbed freshwater marsh with a cypress dome, wet prairie, and some dry and wet flatwoods. The southern boundary abuts the JWCWMA, the western boundary is a FP&L transmission line easement, and the eastern boundary is S.R. 710. Across S.R. 710 are rural undeveloped lands.

- b. Wetlands: The 1.25-acre and 28.37-acre parcels comprising the JWCWMA land transfer consist of a mix of upland and wetland habitat types. Wetlands within the 1.25-acre parcel located adjacent to the intersection of the Seminole/Pratt-Whitney Road and S.R. 710 are limited to the southwest section of the parcel and consist of wet prairie and freshwater marsh. Wetlands are dispersed throughout the 28.37-acre parcel located west of the Seminole/Pratt-Whitney Road and north of 94th Street North and consist of a mix of wet prairie, freshwater marsh, and wet pine flatwoods.

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The use of these JWCWMA parcels to accommodate the PBCBRP would result in the loss of these wetlands and associated wildlife values. As a result, a third parcel of land comprising 60 acres is proposed as trade for the functional loss of 29.62 acres of the JWCWMA. This parcel of land, located north of the Palm Beach-Martin County line and south of the S.R. 710, abuts the northern boundary of the JWCWMA. Wetlands within this parcel comprise approximately 40 acres and consist of a mix of deep marsh, wet prairie, and cypress strands.

- c. Floodplains: Examination of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps, Community Panel Number 120192-0050B (Palm Beach County) and 120161-0475B (Martin County) indicate that the JWCWMA parcel areas and the Minkin Parcel area are located within FEMA Zone B, areas between the 100-year and 500-year flood. The project would be developed in accordance with Executive Order 11988, "Floodplain Management."
- d. Wildlife and Habitat: Even though the 1.25- and 28.37-acre parcels comprising the JWCWMA land transfer are located adjacent to existing roadways, utilization of these tracts by wildlife is high. During field reviews, extensive deer trails were found within and adjacent to the parcels. State and federal listed species that may utilize these areas include multiple wading bird species, the eastern indigo snake, and gopher tortoise.

The transfer of these JWCWMA parcels would result in the functional loss of 29.62 acres of habitat and wildlife-related values. This loss would be replaced through the transfer of a 60-acre parcel of land to the JWCWMA. Wildlife utilization of this replacement parcel is also high due to its mix of natural upland and wetland habitat types and is used by many of the same species which occur on the JWCWMA parcels that would be subjected to changed use.

As part of this study, wildlife utilization of all parcels associated with the land transfer will be evaluated in accordance with federal and state requirements and guidelines. Results of the evaluation will be coordinated with federal and state resource agencies.

- e. Outstanding Florida Waters: No involvement.
- f. Aquatic Preserves: No involvement.
- g. Coastal Zone Consistency Determination Required? Yes.

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- h. Cultural Resources: A Cultural Resources Assessment Survey will be conducted and coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historic Resources and the Palm Beach County Historic Preservation Ordinance. Any potential findings identified during the survey process will be investigated to determine their eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. While separate surveys conducted nearby suggest that evidence of paleontological fossils exist in the area, no significant archeological or historic sites are anticipated.
- i. Coastal Barrier Resources: No involvement.
- j. Contamination: A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment conducted on the undeveloped 60-acre Minkin Parcel did not identify potential contamination on or adjacent to the property.  
  
A site inspection was performed for the two parcels in the JWCWMA. The 28.37-acre parcel did not identify potential contamination on the property. A site inspection of the undeveloped 1.25-acre parcel also indicated no potential contamination on or adjacent to the property.
- k. Sole Source Aquifer: There are no sole source aquifers located within the project study area.
- l. Noise: No involvement.
- m. Other Comments: Potential secondary and cumulative effects of the land exchange upon the JWCWMA will be identified and discussed in the EA document.
- n. Public Involvement: A public involvement program is being developed to support this analysis. Depending on the comments received in response to this notice, it is hoped that an initial EA document will be released for public comment within the next two months. Additional review opportunities are planned. The public involvement program will encourage and rely on community-based planning with two workshops, an informational website, and public displays of analytic documents planned.

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4. Navigable Waterway Crossing:

No involvement.

5. Permits Anticipated to be Required:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
404 Permit

South Florida Water Management District  
Environmental Resource Permit (ERP)

Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)